

Washington, DC (February 7, 2011) – Last week, Gus met with a group of local fishermen and fishing groups who are concerned that recently imposed regulations and catch restrictions are harming their businesses.

“These folks have been hit by the recession, by the oil spill, and now by a ban on fishing for gag grouper,” Gus said. “They’re hurting and I want to do what I can to help them.”

Effective Jan.1, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued a six-month ban on recreational gag grouper fishing in federal waters. Commercial fishermen are now limited to 100,000 pounds of gag grouper in 2011. The fishing industry believes these limits are based on faulty and out-of-date data.

Gus arranged the meeting to hear the concerns from all groups, to determine what could be done to help reduce the negative impact this vital industry has faced, and to encourage the fishing industry to continue active discussions with its local, state and federal officials.

Representatives from the NMFS, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the Fishing Rights Alliance attended the meeting.